



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

DATE: September 23, 2010

TO: Wayne Rew, Chair
Pat Modugno, Vice Chair
Esther L. Valadez, Commissioner
Leslie G. Bellamy, Commissioner
Harold V. Helsley, Commissioner

FROM: Maria Masis, AICP, Supervising Regional Planner
Phillip Estes, AICP, Principal Regional Planner *PE/Estes*

SUBJECT: REVISED Application and Supplemental Information

Project No. R2008-00549-(4): Plan Amendment No. 2008 00004
1920 Brea Canyon Cut-Off Rd., Rowland Heights

Enclosed, please find additional information, a CD video, and a letter which serves to REVISE the above-referenced application. This information was submitted by the applicant on September 22, 2010.

The applicant no longer seeks a text amendment to create a new land use category. The revised application now indicates a map amendment request from U1 (1.1 to 3.2 du/acre) to U5 (22.1 to 35 dwelling units per acre) category. The applicant has also reduced the number of proposed dwelling units from 775 to 537.

As discussed in the staff analysis, staff will seek Commission action to initiate the plan amendment application process. Staff's recommendation, as indicated in the staff report, remains unchanged.

MM:PE



September 21, 2010

Mr. Phillip Estes
Principal Regional Planner
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Project No. R 2008-00549-(4) 1920 Brea Canyon Cut-Off Road, Rowland Heights

Dear Mr. Estes:

We are writing to update you on the status of the above-referenced project. As you know, the County has published the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed project, which consists of 775 for-lease residential units in the Rowland Heights community of unincorporated Los Angeles County. In response to community concerns, the applicant agrees to revise its applications to reflect the "Reduced Density Alternative" proposed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report. We will no longer pursue the 775 unit development nor seek a text amendment to the Rowland Heights Community General Plan. The "Reduced Density Alternative" achieves the 35 units per acre U5 designation (537 Units) contained in Rowland Heights' Community General Plan, and reduces building height, density, and traffic impacts as compared to the 775 unit development.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Commission, Planning staff, and the community as the review and application process proceeds. Should you have any further questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact my anytime.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Genthe", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Genthe
Project Manager & Agent for
Canyons Apartments, LLC

cc: Julie Moore
Cindy Starrett
Peter J. Gutierrez

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September 22, 2010

Regional Planning Commission
320 West Temple Street
1390 Hall of Records
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Additional Applicant Submittals for Regional Planning Commission
Community Meeting (September 29, 2010) Project No. R 2008-00549-
(4) 1920 Brea Canyon Cut-Off Road, Rowland Heights

Honorable Commissioners:

We look forward to your consideration of the request to initiate a plan amendment for nearly 16 acres of land in the Rowland Heights Community Plan. The Southland Church and School have reached agreements to relocate from this property which is being sold by Southland Church. Enclosed is some supplemental material in advance of the hearing.

We have worked closely with stakeholders since your last hearing over two years ago, leading to significant reductions in size of the proposed project. Over 35 meetings have been held including several which were noticed community-wide. Due to these extensive outreach efforts, we concluded it was appropriate to revise our requested application zoning to be compliant with the U5 designation already allowed by the Rowland Heights Community General Plan (see attached reduced density application revision letter). This revision also eliminates the need for a text amendment to the General Plan. Enclosed is a DVD with video testimony from supporters of the Canyons Residences project.

In response to the dire predictions of increased crime and traffic suggested in the petition submitted to your Commission which was attached to the staff report, we also enclose additional evidence on the benefits of multifamily investment in the County. As cited in the presentation we previously provided, the Urban Land Institute ("ULI") has issued a report titled *Higher Density Development Myth and Fact*. The study by this highly respected non-profit educational and research institute concludes that "well-designed higher-density development, properly integrated into an existing community, can become a significant community asset that adds to the quality of life and property values for existing residents while addressing the needs of a growing and changing population."

The ULI report also documents information about property values and public safety. Studies have shown that well-designed higher density projects have either no

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impact or a slightly positive impact on property appreciation rates in the surrounding area. The introduction of high quality rental options enhances housing opportunities and as the ULI study suggests, may actually increase the pool of potential future homebuyers in the area. Also addressed in the ULI study is the misconception that higher-density housing leads to higher crime rates. The study suggests that such developments can actually help reduce crime by increasing pedestrian activity and by placing more "eyes of the street."

Of course, contributions to the cost of public services including public safety will also be generated by this project. In addition to construction investment and job creation, the sale by a nonprofit entity will return the site to the property tax rolls for increased long term contributions to the financial sustainability of the County.

Once again, we look forward to the opportunity to discuss these and other planning issues at the upcoming plan initiation meeting.

Best regards,



Michael Genthe
Project Manager & Agent for
Canyons Apartments, LLC

cc: Julie Moore
Cindy Starrett
Peter J. Gutierrez